

REMARKS

Claims 1-18 are all the claims pending in the application, including new claims 9-18 added by the present Amendment.

Claims 1-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Ito (US 5,535,289). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection as set forth below.

The present invention relates to an image transfer and output method and an image transfer and output system. The present invention also relates to an image signal input terminal and an image signal output terminal for use in the image transfer and output system. An exemplary embodiment of the present invention is shown in FIG. 1, including an image signal input apparatus 100, a transfer device 200, and an operation processing and displaying terminal 300, which includes an operation processing device 310 and an image displaying device 320. In the exemplary embodiment, the operation processing, such as addition of original medical images, are performed after transfer of the images in the network to remove transfer inefficiencies and to ease user interface operability.

Ito relates to a method for processing an energy subtraction image such that noise occurring in the energy subtraction image, which is obtained from energy subtraction processing of radiation images, can be reduced. FIGS. 1A and 1B illustrate the processes performed on images by Ito, such as subtraction, superposition, smoothing, and weighted averaging.

Applicant submits that Ito does not teach or suggest all of the limitations of the claims of the present invention. Specifically, with regard to claim 4, Ito fails to disclose an image output device for performing image outputting in accordance with a received original image signal, wherein the image output device operates such that the image output device performs image

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outputting in accordance with the one original image signal having been transferred. The Examiner asserts that the weighted averaging process corresponds to the image outputting of the claim, but we disagree. Applicant submits that the portion of Ito's device that performs weighted averaging is not an image output device, as claimed in claim 4. Rather, the portion of Ito's device that performs weighted averaging is simply a processor, which determines a weighted average of image signals. The device of Ito which outputs image signals is the CRT display device 32. As disclosed in col. 9, lines 19-25, the CRT display device 32 outputs a composite image 45, based on the composite image signal N obtained from the weighted averaging process. Thus, Ito discloses an output device which outputs images based on a composite image signal N, rather than an original image signal, as required by claim 4. Therefore, claim 4 and its dependent claims 5 and 6 are not anticipated by Ito.

Likewise, Applicant submits that independent claim 1 is not anticipated by Ito, at least because Ito does not teach or suggest transferring at least one original image signal, which is among a plurality of original image signals, to an image output device. As noted above, Ito discloses transferring a composite image signal N, not an original image signal, to the output CRT display device 32. Thus, claim 1 and its dependent claims 2 and 3 are not anticipated by Ito.

With regard to claim 8, Applicant submits that claim 8 is not anticipated by Ito for reasons analogous to those presented above, in relation to claims 1 and 4.

Applicant submits that claim 7 is not anticipated by Ito, because Ito fails to teach or suggest an image signal input apparatus for feeding a plurality of original image signals representing radiation image information. The Examiner asserts that the internal memory of Ito

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corresponds to the claimed image signal input apparatus, but Applicant disagrees. The internal memory of Ito is simply a memory, which stores image data. As disclosed in col. 6, lines 51-53 of Ito, the first image signal SO1 and the second image signal SO2 are read from the internal memory of the apparatus 30. In other words, the internal memory is simply a storage device for image data that must be read from the internal memory. By contrast, the internal memory is not an image signal input apparatus. Without being read from, the internal memory would provide no image data to the apparatus 30 of Ito. Hence, the internal memory should not be considered to correspond to the image signal input apparatus of claim 7 of the present invention. Accordingly, claim 7 is not anticipated by Ito.

New claims 9-18 are added to further define the present invention and are believed to be allowable, at least because of their dependence from claims 1, 4, 7, and 8, respectively.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

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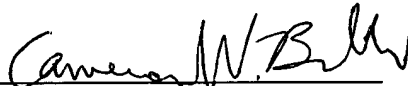
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